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SUCCESS STORY

Afghan-led Rehabilitation in Paktika

District Governor builds a process to improve irrigation systems in agrarian villages



A laborer in Khar Lando Village cleans a karez leading to the canal.

Photo: USAID/LGCD

A Paktika District Governor works closely with local residents to identify and implement irrigation projects, improving the district's water supply and building connections between the government and its people.

The Khair Kot Castle (KKC) District is a population center in Paktika Province that struggles to maintain stability against the threat of anti-government violence. A major hindrance is the ongoing disconnect between the government and the population. Communities are often unwilling to work with or engage the government because of its historically weak presence in the district. Nevertheless, KCC District Governor Abdul Mateen is reestablishing the government's presence in remote areas by rehabilitating infrastructure and supporting agricultural initiatives with financial support from USAID.

District Governor Mateen established a process by which villages submit petitions for assistance to the local Community Development Council (CDC), which screens the requests and then submits selected petitions to Mateen. He then works closely with local shuras to identify specific community infrastructure for rehabilitation. USAID's Local Governance and Community Development (LGCD) project funds these activities through community stabilization grants.

Recent successes of this process include the rehabilitation of vital irrigation canals. District Governor Mateen requested grants for three villages, monitored the work, and disbursed final payments, ensuring steady personal interaction with the communities throughout the life of the activity. Residents led the rehabilitation, removing silt, and concreting culverts. The grants generated 756 days of employment for local laborers and restored an estimated 6 km of irrigation infrastructure.

A local CDC member said of the rehabilitation, "A lot of water was being wasted in the past. It was also unclean. Now there is no water waste at all and the water is clean, which will help prevent disease."

These grants and the associated engagement processes enhanced District Governor Mateen's reputation and demonstrated the government's ability to respond to the needs of its citizens. LGCD continues to work throughout Afghanistan to improve stability by connecting local populations with local government structures to provide better service delivery.